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A POWER OF THE AIR.

IN these latter days, with all our scientific knowledge and mechanical appliances, it is wonderful how little we really know about some of the familiar forces that unseen surround us. Of all things in nature, electricity is perhaps the most mysterious. It is true the laws that regulate its action under certain conditions are now tolerably well known—it can be collected, controlled, directed. It has been tamed, so to speak, and systematically trained to perform useful services to commerce and society. Yet we are nearly as ignorant of its real nature and essence as were the ancient dwellers in Magnesia, who are said to have discovered a wonderful kind of stony earth that persistently adhered to their iron-shod crooks. One of the greatest of living scientists has said that to the question, What is electricity? he can only reply, that he does not know.

Within us and around us, permeating all matter, this force, or fluid, or whatever name may be applied to it, is ever present—not stationary or in fixed quantity, but continually varying, and restless as the waves of the sea. Although the ebb and flow of the electric tides may be said never to cease, we are usually altogether unconscious of their movements or their existence. It is only at times of unusual electrical commotion that they become perceptible to the senses, as, for instance, when the aurora is visible in the heavens, when St Elmo's fires are glowing, or during a thunder-storm. That the aurora is electrical in its character there can be no doubt, as its appearance is almost invariably coincident with violent terrestrial disturbances. A brilliant display of aurora is indeed a beautiful sight, which may well excite our admiration and wonder. Streamers, and belts, and waves of light seem to shoot upwards from the northern sky, now advancing, now receding; ever changing, and yet defying you to trace the changes as they occur. Glowing and waning, and glowing again; leaping and darting like a flame, they execute their merry dance—frequently to a curious crackling music of their own—and

'flit ere you can point their place.' The colour of the aurora varies according to altitude, from white to violet or red—white being most common. In more superstitious times, a display of red aurora was invariably interpreted as an omen of approaching war.

St Elmo's fire is a peculiar but, at sea, not unfamiliar phenomenon; and although it chiefly occurs during thunder-storms, it is itself in no way dangerous. It always appears at the apex of lofty tapering objects, resembling a flame of fire rising out of them. It may sometimes be seen at the tops of trees, but more frequently on the masts or yardarms of ships at sea. It is nothing more than a harmless discharge of electricity.

But atmospheric electricity assumes its most impressive aspect when it appears in the lightning flash. An earthquake excites only a feeling of terror; but while a thunder-storm has its terrors, it has also its fascinations. When 'heaven's artillery' plays, we cannot but be impressed with a sense of our own littleness and helplessness, and touched with a feeling of fear. Yet there is so much that is sublime and majestic in the roll of the thunder and the gleam of the lightning, that we are fascinated, and constrained to watch and listen with awe and reverence. We feel that we stand in the presence of a power with which we cannot cope, a power irresistible, and apparently without guidance or control. The next flash may deal our deathblow; yet this thought is not generally uppermost. Many people, it is true, have a terror of lightning, but the feeling often results quite as much from physical as from mental causes; that is to say, it is due not more to an intellectual apprehension of impending danger than to an excited nervous system, consequent on the electrified condition of the atmosphere. There are many persons whose nervous systems seem to suffer complete collapse during a thunder-storm. At times of electrical disturbance, even when unaccompanied by any visible sign or audible sound, they are agitated and uneasy. Some individuals are able to tell when such a disturbance is in progress, although

others may be quite oblivious of it; and if the lightning actually begins to play, they exhibit the most acute signs of distress. In a building exceptionally well provided with lightning-protectors, we have reasoned to no purpose with such individuals, on the occasion of a thunder-storm. It is not fear, they say, that agitates them; they cannot account for the feeling—they simply 'cannot help it.' The subject of the influence of atmospheric electricity on the human system is one that will bear further investigation from scientists.

There are three kinds of lightning—forked or zigzag lightning, sheet-lightning, and globular lightning. The sky generally gives timely warning of the outbreak of a thunder-storm. Heavy masses of singularly opaque cumulous and cirro-stratus cloud are formed, from which rain falls—or it may be hail. Lightning is a discharge of electricity between two clouds, or between clouds and the earth. Fortunately for us, most of the lightning passes from cloud to cloud. When one body becomes more highly charged with electricity than another in its vicinity, there is a tendency to transfer part of its charge to that other body, so as to establish neutrality. The greater the difference between the charges in the two bodies, the greater the strain or tension. This tension is technically called the 'potential.' Usually, the air is positively electrified; but during a thunder-storm the signs (positive and negative) as well as the potential are continually changing. Before a discharge of lightning takes place, a potential inconceivably great is established. We are all familiar with the sight of telegraph wires: this country and Europe generally are covered with them as with a network. Each of these wires requires from ten to a hundred battery-cells to flash the telegraphic signals. Yet there is not in all Europe sufficient battery-power to make a respectable flash of lightning—say, a couple of miles in length, while some flashes extend to ten miles in length, or more. Nothing can stand before lightning. It deals destruction to every opposing object in its path, striking down the most solid masonry, shrivelling up the sturdiest trees, and melting the hardest rock. But, like everything in nature, it has its uses—relieving the overcharged clouds, restoring the disturbed equilibrium, so to speak, and purifying the air. But how is it that the thunder-cloud is charged with such enormous electrical energy? The phenomenon is due to great differences of temperature in neighbouring masses of air; or sometimes, as in winter, to violent cyclonic disturbances. Condensation of the aqueous vapour then taking place, electricity is developed on the molecules of water. Each molecule has a definite potential. As the molecules coalesce, the potential increases; and as a single drop of water contains billions of molecules, it is not difficult to understand how the potential of a thunder-cloud should be so transcendently great. A cloud highly charged with electricity, either positive or negative, electrifies by induction the ground

beneath, or the neighbouring clouds, causing electricity of the opposite sign to be there accumulated. A high potential is thus established. The electricity of the one sign strives to unite with its opposite. Under certain conditions, the union may be effected quietly and harmlessly; under others, with startling accompaniments. The discharge may take place gradually and without observation through lofty objects, such as trees or steeples. But if the potential is high, and these objects do not provide an adequate passage, the result is a lightning flash. The electrical tension is thus reduced or destroyed. A peculiar effect, known as the return shock, often accompanies the sudden combination of the two electricities. The instantaneous change from a highly electrified to a neutral state causes a violent concussion—not to be confounded with the lightning-stroke itself—which is often dangerous, and sometimes even proves fatal.

As is well known, electricity has a tendency to collect at points, and to spring towards points. This characteristic, which it fortunately possesses, serves a useful purpose, as, by taking advantage of it, important buildings are protected from lightning. When the earth is highly charged, the electricity collects at the extremities of the protectors and passes off into the atmosphere. These protectors not only ward off the destructive effects of lightning, but they act in some measure as a preventive of lightning itself. It is even conceivable that, were the ground covered with lightning-protectors in sufficient numbers and of sufficient height, no lightning would ever pass between the clouds and the earth. We have not yet, however, arrived—nor perhaps ever shall arrive—at such a desirable condition of immunity from this danger. The position of greatest peril from lightning is under isolated, unprotected objects, such as trees, though a position *from* the tree, at a distance of the height of the tree, is considered safe. It is not desirable to sit before a fire in a room during a thunder-storm, the soot and the heated air in the chimney acting as conductors. Generally speaking, there is perhaps less danger from lightning in towns than elsewhere, the numerous protectors erected on chimney stalks and church steeples providing some measure of safety. A lightning-conductor affords protection to a space around the diameter of which is four times its height. But great care is necessary in erecting such conductors: they must be continuous; that is to say, they must have no bad joints. It is also essential they should have proper connection with the earth; merely dipping the wires into the ground will not do. Underground water-mains make good earth-connections. Where these are not available, an earth-plate of sheet-copper, three feet by three feet, and an eighth of an inch thick, should be buried in wet earth, surrounded with coke. But no work of this description should be undertaken without skilled supervision.

An amusing story, illustrative of the futility of using a bad earth-connection, is told of a telegraph official of limited experience, who was instructed to put a wire to earth for testing purposes. The test showing an unlooked-for result, inquiries were instituted, when it was found that the zealous official had stuck the end of the wire into a flower-pot! But in reality the danger from

lightning is not so great as is generally supposed; not more than one human being out of two million is annually killed by it, a proportion which is small as compared with that of fatalities resulting from accidents on the streets of our large cities.

Every one is familiar with the fact that lightning does not spring *direct* from cloud to cloud, or to the earth, but pursues a zigzag course. This is due to the fact that the air is not equally humid throughout. Electricity always takes the path which offers least resistance to its passage. Damp air is a better conducting medium than dry air; consequently, the lightning selects the dampest route, avoiding the drier strata and zones it encounters, and advances, now directly, now obliquely, until it reaches the opposite cloud, where it subdivides into a number of forks. Owing to the resistance it encounters in its path, intense heat is generated, which causes the air to expand. Immediately after the flash, the air again contracts with great violence and with a loud report, which is echoed and re-echoed among the clouds. The report reaching the ear of the listener from varying distances, is drawn out into a series, and, being still further prolonged by the echoes, the roll of the thunder is produced. It is a curious fact that, although the sound of thunder is exceedingly loud when heard near at hand, the area over which it is audible is comparatively circumscribed. The noise of a cannonade will be heard, under favourable conditions, at a distance of nearly a hundred miles, while the sound of thunder does not travel over fifteen miles. The occurrence of the thunder and the lightning is, of course, simultaneous; but as light travels faster than sound—its passage is practically instantaneous—the flash may be seen several seconds before the thunder is heard. The distance of thunder may thus be approximately estimated, an interval of five seconds between the flash and the thunder-clap being allowed to the mile.

Sheet-lightning has the appearance of a sheet of flame momentarily illuminating part of the sky or cloud-surface. It is, in reality, but the reflection of lightning flashing beyond the horizon or behind the clouds, and at too great a distance for the thunder to be audible.

But the most remarkable of all the manifestations of electricity is globular lightning, in appearance like a ball of fire moving leisurely along, and remaining visible, it may be, several minutes. Many curious accounts are related of its vagaries. One of the most interesting and circumstantial is that given by Mr Fitzgerald, County Donegal, Ireland, who saw a globe of fire slowly descend from the Glendowan Mountains to the valleys below. Where it first touched the ground, it excavated a hole about twenty feet square, 'as if it had been cut out with a huge knife.' This was scarcely the work of a minute. For a distance of twenty perches it ploughed a trench about four feet deep, and, moving along the bank of a stream, it made a furrow a foot in depth. Finally, it tore away part of the bank five perches in length and five feet deep, and 'hurling the immense mass into the bed of the stream, it flew into the opposite peaty bank.' The globe was visible twenty minutes, and traversed a distance of a mile, showing that its progress was, for lightning, very slow indeed.

During thunder-storms of extreme violence on Deeside, balls of fire are occasionally seen to roll down the sides of Lochnagar, which are no doubt identical with globular lightning.

RICHARD CABLE, THE LIGHTSHIPMAN.

CHAPTER XXV.—LAVENDER.

WHEN Josephine reached her own room, she threw herself into an armchair and said imperiously: 'Pack my things. I will point out what I want.'

Cable, instead of obeying, stood before her with his head bent, his grave eyes fixed on her face. His brow was lined. Had there been these furrows there before his marriage? Josephine had not observed them previously.

'What is the meaning of this?' he asked.

'Take your hands out of your pockets when addressing me,' she said, and fanned her hot face with her pocket-handkerchief.

He obeyed, and folded his arms. 'I do not understand what this means,' he said.

'Indeed?'—spoken contemptuously.

'Why do you object to my going with you to the lady's house, Josephine?'

'I will trouble you,' she said with voice shaking with anger—'I will trouble you to call me by my proper name. I am not Joss-ephine, as you are pleased to designate me. The patriarch is not, I believe, by the most illiterate entitled Joss-eph, and I object to be called other than Josephine.'

He looked at her with distressed expression on his face. 'I did not think there was anything wrong'—he began, and drew his kerchief from his pocket.

Then she stamped with her feet together impatiently on the floor. 'For heaven's sake,' she exclaimed, 'put away that detestable spotted blue pocket-handkerchief, as big as a sail! It is vulgar, it is odious. I hate the sight of it. It turns me faint. Give it to Jane for a duster.' She was in that condition of irritation when every trifle exasperates.—'Please, open the window,' she went on. 'I am suffocating. Your boots have been greased at sea with rancid tallow; they will not take the blacking, and—they are insufferable.'

He went to the window, unhasped the casement, and threw it wide, then stood, looking out. He drew a long breath, inhaling the sea-air, fresh and free, that rushed in, and fluttered the gauze valance of the dressing-table.

'You are right,' he said huskily; 'it is close in here. One can hardly breathe at all here—not in this room only, but in the parlour and the hall, on the terrace, in the garden, everywhere within the garden walls.'

In the window hung a brass cage that contained a bullfinch. Richard put his hand to the cage-door, unfastened it, and put in his hand.

'What are you about, Richard?' asked Josephine petulantly. 'Why do you not go on with the packing?'

He did not answer. The imprisoned bird had hopped on his finger. He drew his hand from the cage so steadily that the bullfinch did not

attempt to leave his perch. Then he put his arm out of the window, and the bird remained, turning its head about and uttering an astonished or pleased cheep!

'What are you doing!' cried Josephine, and started to her feet. Her call, or the vibration, alarmed the little bird; it spread its wings and flew away. 'What have you done!' burst forth Josephine, throwing herself again into her chair. 'My Puffles! my poor Puffles!'

'The room was close, and the bird could not breathe,' said Richard. 'I felt for the poor little wretch—a sort of fellow-feeling, I suppose.'

'Richard!' she said, half crying, 'this is too unkind, too cruel of you! You knew that I was fond of the bird; that is why you have deprived me of him. I will never, never forgive you.' Then the tears came into her eyes—not tears of sorrow for the loss of her pet, but of mortified pride and of angry resentment. Her flushed face, her pouting lips, her swollen muscles, all proclaimed wrath, not grief. 'I wish,' she muttered—'I wish that we had never'—

'What do you wish?' he asked, facing her.

'I wish'— But she checked herself. Then, thinking that his feet touched her skirts, she brushed the latter away and tucked them under her knees, with passionate scorn in her action. 'Please, proceed with the packing. Lady Brentwood (*Ma'am*, as you call her) is not to be kept waiting an eternity, whilst you torment me with letting my pets loose. The horses have to be considered as well as she.'

'When do you return? To-morrow?'

'I do not know. I do not care if I stay a week to be free of my troubles.'

'What troubles?'

'O—troubles I have brought on myself—troubles past your comprehension.'

He said no more, but got out her box, and began to pack. Whilst he was thus engaged, he brooded on her words, and said: 'I think I understand you.'

'I usually speak so as to be understood,' she replied.

'Josephine,' said he, 'why will you not allow me to go with you? I know very well that I am no company for grand folks. I'm like a plain horn-handled steel fork that has lost its way, and got among the silver in the plate-basket. God knows, I do not desire to push myself where I am not wanted; but the lady did wish to have me.'

Josephine laughed contemptuously. 'Absurd! She did not want you, except as Samson, to make sport before the Philistines.'

'I do not believe you. The world is not so bad as you suppose.'

'Lady Brentwood was not sincere; she was laughing at you all the time she spoke with us.'

He shook his head. 'She's got a kind face and a kind way, and I don't think so bad of her as that. As for the Lords and Admirals! I'm not afraid of them. Men, be they ever so high, always know the wally of a true man.'

'Wally!' groaned Josephine. Then in a tone of bitter mockery she said rapidly: 'O generation of wipers! Pass the vinegar.'

'What do you mean?' he asked, rising from her box on which he was engaged, and standing before her, with his face red, the veins in

his forehead distended and purple. 'Are you laughing at me? Scoffing at me, Josephine?'

'I merely repeat things I have heard.'

'When—where?'

'Oh, the other day I overheard you teaching the children a text from Scripture that began, O generation of vipers.'

'Well—I did not pronounce a word right, and so you scorn me? Is that about it?'

She shrugged her shoulders and made no reply. Her heart was beating furiously. She linked one foot behind the other and kicked the footstool from her.

'The Lord's own words,' said Richard sternly. 'Even they aren't sacred to you, not when a father is teaching them to his little ones. What odds if the pronunciation of the words be wrong, so long as the words themselves be right?' He knelt again at her box and finished packing.

When he had done, she stood up. The sting of self-reproach made itself felt in her heart; but she was too proud to acknowledge that she had been in the wrong.

'Richard,' she said, 'you may go. Ring the bell to have the box taken down. I must dress myself hastily.'

When she descended the stairs a few minutes later, she looked about for him, but did not see him. He was not in the hall, nor in the drawing-room. As she got into the carriage, her eyes wandered in search of him; but he was not to be seen.

'Where is Richard?' she asked of her father.

He answered superciliously: 'He went loafing through the garden a minute ago.'

She settled herself beside Lady Brentwood.

'My dear,' said the latter, 'I am positive that lavender will thrive here.'

'What do you mean?'

'Do you not know? Where the wife rules, there the lavender flourishes.'

CHAPTER XXVI.—MOSQUITO STINGS.

When Richard left the house, he did not go to the cottage or to the yacht. He passed through the gate to the seawall, and stood outside the palisade of the garden, leaning against it, overshadowed by the boughs and fragrant flowers of a lime, looking out to sea. He could catch a glimpse of the drive; and as he heard the grind of the carriage-wheels on the gravel, he turned and looked, and saw Josephine depart with Lady Brentwood. Mr Cornellis was also in the carriage. So, as he, Richard, was not suffered to go, Lady Brentwood had carried off Mr Cornellis. In the opinion of Josephine, her father was suited to move in good society, to entertain Lords of the Admiralty; but her husband was not; he must be kept in the background, lest he should make himself ridiculous.

For the first time in his life, Richard's bright and crystalline humour clouded. Perhaps he had caught the infection from his wife. He tried to look up into the deep sky, but his cap did not shade his eyes; the brilliancy of the light dazzled him; besides, his eyes were burning. He rested them gloomily on the tufts of sovereign-wood and sea-spinach that sprouted between the stones at his feet. He had controlled himself before Josephine with an effort; now his chafed temper

swelled and tossed within him like a race of angry sea round Hanford Point. Flakes of red drove across his face, like the foam-bows driven by the wind on the rushing tide. His muscles quivered, and his pulses leaped. He could not go to the cottage till the first paroxysm of passion had passed away. A woman is glib with her tongue both in her mirthful and in her angry moods; she shoots out her words without much consideration. Her tongue is her natural weapon of defence. We would not blame her were she to use it only when attacked, in self-defence. The mosquito also has fangs; but it employs the barbs not only to protect itself, but to goad those who sleep, or ignore its existence, into taking cognisance of its insignificant self. What a light and feathery being it is! how delicately slender, how buoyant on its transparent wings! As we lie on a bench in the sweet summer evening and look up into the skies, full of twilight, like silver resolved into vapour, and our souls mount to the far-off stars, whilst the song of the nightingale chanting among the poplars fills our ears, humm—humm—whisp! in an instant our faculties are drawn away from the ideal and transcendental to a minute gnat that has perched on us. Our peace is gone; the poison has penetrated our veins; irritation intolerable ensues; we tear with our nails, but cannot tear the irritation away, though we tear till the blood flows. Does the venomous bite cease to vex in an hour? O no! it lasts for days, and only slowly ceases to worry and anger us.

Why did the mosquito light on us? We offered it no menace; we were not even thinking of flies; we were far away among the stars. Can it be that it affords pleasure to the mosquito to stab and inject an infinitesimally small drop of the most aggravating of poisons into our blood? Can it be that the creature bites us out of envy, because we were in spirit among the stars, instead of occupying our minds with mosquitoes?

It is said that female poisoners have made victims out of mere wantonness, not because they bore spite, but because it afforded them gratification to display their power. It is perhaps the same with the mosquito. Was the Marchioness de Brinvilliers the last of the female poisoners? By no means. The poisoners are as numerous now as ever; they fly about in clouds; they rise up out of every pool; they lurk under every green leaf; they hum in every room. Pshaw! We hulk men, what care we for these midges? Compare our size, our strength, the texture of our bones, the toughness of our skins, with theirs. It is absurd to suppose that we need fear and avoid them. Pshaw! What can a microscopic drop of poison effect in the great rivers of our blood? Pshaw! How can such flimsy, merry-minded, little creatures pierce these tough hides? So we argue, and next moment are writhing and tearing ourselves, and crying out in pain, like Hercules in the garment of Deianira. I have been to an apothecary, and showed him my hands and face covered with mosquito bites, and asked for something to neutralise the irritation. He laughed in my face, and said there was no remedy. So there is no remedy for the bite of that other mosquito; there is no alkali yet found strong enough to neutralise the drop of venom found at the end

of a woman's tongue, thrust into the blood—not, maybe, out of virulence at all, but out of playfulness, out of wantonness. O the hours, the days, the months of tossing, of torment, even of delirium, caused by one little word at the point of a soft little red tongue, shot into the veins and curdling the heart—shot in, in a moment of vexation, without premeditated malice. We may run away from the tormentor, but we carry the poison with us. Perhaps the mosquito is surprised at the effect of its fangs, and would recall the poison if it could; but it cannot; and it comes whirring its wings and tossing its plummy head and piping softly in our ears—asking to be allowed to apply its lips to the wound; but we shrink away; the lips frighten us—behind them lurks the poison. O ye mosquitoes, I pray you be pitiful towards us rude men! We are incapable of protecting ourselves. We cannot permanently abide behind mosquito curtains. But, alas! what avails a cry for mercy? As long as the world lasts, women must sting, and men must weep; and the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep.

Richard stood under the flowering lime in which the bees were busy, leaning against the palisades, with heaving breast and hands clenched at his side, and brows that lowered and dripped with agony. Real physical pain was at his heart, a pain that affected respiration and pulsation alike, a pain that numbed his brain and hindered it from articulate thought. He had loved Josephine. An uncultured man looks up to a lady of refinement with reverence and worship, such as she herself can hardly understand. To him, she is something so ineffably perfect, that he is ready to become her slave, and ask for nothing in reward for his fidelity and adoration but a smile. It is the most unselfish, ethereal, of all love. It is like that which the Minnesingers felt for princesses in whose courts, beneath whose footstools, they knelt and sang. To Richard Cable, Josephine had been such an ideal; he had looked up to her with infinite love, as to one unattainable; and yet in this looking up was associated a feeling of vast compassion for the girl in her loneliness, her ignorance of the highest aims of life, and a longing to touch her hand with respect and lead her into the right way. What a mistake he had made! He lead her! She had bewildered him, and he had lost his knowledge of the compass-points. He saw that he could be of no use to her, that he was to her an encumbrance and a source of daily irritation. She was out of ease when he was present; his voice scalded her ears; his attitudes offended her; his boots made him insupportable in her room. He set his teeth. A glimmer was in his eyes, like the light beneath a thunder-cloud. He would not bring his children into the house. They should remain with their grandmother at the cottage, and he would spend most of his time with them, and teach them Gospel maxims—the Sermon on the Mount—without suffering her to overhear and scoff at his lessons. No; on no account should they be brought to the Hall, where they might learn to laugh at their father, for his brogue, his boots, his blue kerchief. In the cottage they were encircled with simple and healthy surroundings, and were taught to look up to and reverence their father. He would not have them reared to an artificial life, to be made young ladies of, wincing

at his *Vs*, and turning away their faces from his boots. He looked at these boots. They had been serviceable to him on many a rough night. It was true that the leather was greased, and perhaps the grease had not always been fresh. The boots had kept his feet dry when the waves washed the deck. Sailors cannot wear patent-leather dress boots.

Richard could endure a great deal; he was so humble, that he was ready to accept correction; he was so forbearing, that he could allow for the infirmities of the weak; but his patience had its limits. He could not endure the thought of becoming despicable in the eyes of his children. The notion that such an eventuality was possible had never before occurred to him; now it seemed certain, were his little ones to be brought into association with his wife. He put his hand to his head. His rough strong hand was shaking as though he were recovering from a long illness. A qualm almost like that of sea-sickness came over his heart; indeed, everything swayed about and under him. His knees were weak, and would hardly support him. He laid a hand on the top of the palisade and rested his head on it. In a few moments the giddiness would pass away. He put out his other hand on the palisade and shut his eyes. Then he felt something alight on his finger and press it. He looked heavily up, and saw that Josephine's bullfinch had come out of the lime-tree and had perched on his hand. He shook the bird off; but little Puffles, after hovering about a moment, returned and re-alighted on his finger.

What did the bullfinch want? Was it already weary of its freedom and desired to be returned to its cage? Was it frightened at the vastness and complexity of the world, into which it had been launched, and longed for the narrowness and simplicity of the world within bars? With Puffles it was other than with Richard. He chafed at the restraints which encumbered him on all sides, and the bird was frightened at its freedom. He looked at the bullfinch some time dreamily, wonderingly. He held his finger very still, and the bird began to polish his beak on it. Puffles was pleased to grip a warm hand instead of cold twigs. The pressure of the little feet and claws sent a thrill of pleasure along Richard's arm to his heart. In it was an appeal to his protection; and like his mother, Richard's heart at once responded to the appeal of feebleness. He raised his head and put his other hand over the back of the bird. 'Come, Puffles!' he said; 'each to his proper element. You, to bondage. I—I—God alone knows when and how I shall escape!' Then he went in, through the garden, very gently, holding the little creature covered with his right hand, and walking evenly. The bird made no attempt at escape.

At the pantry window stood the butler and the boy, looking out, whilst polishing the silver and glass; and they chuckled as they saw him come along. No doubt he looked absurd, walking slowly with one arm extended, and the other covering the tiny creature that rested on his finger.

'It's o' no use winking at facks,' said the butler, 'or trying to disguise 'em. Master ain't an atom of a gentleman. He don't look it; he don't feel it.'

When Cable reached his wife's room, carrying the little bird, he replaced the creature in its cage and looked about him. Well, it was not fair to her for him to give liberty to her pet without asking her leave. Perhaps he had aggravated her to speak more sharply than she intended; perhaps now she regretted what she had said.

'I'm glad the bird is back,' he said. 'She will be pleased, and think more kindly of me.' His angry mood gave way to gentler feelings. He saw that she had scattered her clothes about the floor as she had taken them off, and left her drawers and wardrobe doors open. He took up and folded her dress, shut the drawers and closed the wardrobe. 'I'm a porpoise in a whiting net,' he said. 'What a different sort of place this is from my cabin in the lightship or my room at the cottage! No nicknacks there. Well, I suppose I must accommodate myself to my shell, as the chicken said that had to be hatched. I can't make my shell fit me like the lobster.'

When a cool leaf is applied to a wound, the fever ceases for a while, but the relief is only momentary. Presently the fire makes itself felt as hot as before. The calmness that had come over Richard lasted only so long as the pressure of the little claws remained on his finger. No sooner had he left the room, than his pain and heat returned. The poison was in his blood. Little Puffles could not undo the mischief done by Josephine. The poison had penetrated to the heart.

He went out of the house once more, and through the garden to the seawall. As he walked he had his hands in his pockets; but suddenly recalling the offence he had given to Josephine by so carrying them, withdrew his hands and folded them before him. How many commandments were there, he wondered, in the social code? The moral was simple enough, contained in two tables. How would he ever master the many and complicated rules, many and complicated as the hieroglyphs of the Chinese tongue, where every word has its special character? A Chinaman learns to read as he learns to speak; from infancy, as his ear catches a sound, it is associated with a symbol to his eye. So a gentleman or a lady grows up amidst the intricacies of social life, and all its symbols and rules become familiar from early childhood. But was it possible for a man like Cable, in manhood, to enter into this sphere and speak and act according to its regulations? Was it not as impossible for him as to acquire Chinese writing and the Chinese tongue?

Then another current of thought set in through his brain. His hands had strayed again to his pockets, and in them turned over a few coins. He was now without a profession. He earned nothing; with the exception of a few pounds in the savings-bank, he had nothing of his own; he would therefore have to apply to Josephine for money wherewith to feed and clothe and school his children—ay, and provide for his mother as well. There were small bills due to the grocer and dressmaker; there was the rent for the house. Must he go to his wife with these accounts and ask her to settle them? The thought was unendurable to a self-reliant, proud man. It galled him to the quick to think that

his dear little ones, Polly's children, and his mother, should be henceforth dependents, not on him, but on Josephine.

No; to this he would not submit. There was but one mode of escape from the difficulty—he must enter into some profession, in which he could earn sufficient for the support of his family. But for what profession was he now qualified? It must be one that was gentlemanly, or Josephine would oppose his proposition. And for a gentlemanly profession he was unsuited, because he was not by breeding a gentleman.

As he puzzled his head with these thoughts, he was roused by a slap on the shoulders from a heavy hand. He looked round and saw Jonas Flinders.

'How are you, old boy?' asked his brother-in-law. 'I'm right glad to come across you. You're all with the dress-circle now, and we in the pit ain't fit to be spoken with, I suppose.'

'You are not just,' answered Richard composedly; 'I have never shown any pride.'

'Well, you're so engaged, we can't get a sight of you. Now you're coming on to the *Anchor*, I hope? All your chaps from the *Josephine* are there. You're not going to give them the slip, I hope?'

Cable started. He had forgotten the supper to the crew. After all, Josephine was in the right; he must be present at that. If he absented himself, he would give offence. Why did she not simply say so, and not insult and wound him?

'I fancy you'd forgot about it. My stars! you've got too grand to remember such little matters.'

'I had been reminded of it. For the sake of attending the supper, I did not go out with my wife; but it is true that for the moment I had forgotten. I was busy with my thoughts.'

'I hope they were pleasant. It don't seem as if they were, judging from your face. Why, as I came up, your face was a-twitching and a-wincing as if you'd been stung by some nasty venomous creature. But there—come along. Treat things unpleasant like Pharaoh and his host—drown 'em.'

FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY BADGES.

We do not propose to speak here of the various early revolutionary emblems adopted at different periods of the eventful history of France, each one of which marks a crisis in the nation's onward career, but simply to trace a short history of the badges assumed during the troubles of 1789 and following years, and their subsequent appearance on the world's stage in 1830, 1848, and 1871. Much that is both interesting and new to many of our readers might be said on the two-barred cross of the Holy League; the loaded sling, bunch of coloured ribbons, and wisp of straw of the *Frondeurs* and others; but this would extend the subject beyond reasonable limits.

The most prominent among these badges are the cockades; an old institution in France, they having been introduced to the army by Louis XIII. The cockade is, as a political emblem, essentially French. These quick-tempered and easily moved

people, who love to shout forth their heart-felt convictions to admiring crowds or the coldly indifferent world at large, must have some outward sign of their political sympathies and convictions; naturally enough, therefore, the cockade comes foremost, as the most simple, inexpensive, conspicuous, and visible badge. It is within the reach of poor and rich alike, and may be worn in the buttonhole, or coquettishly ornament the hat. It was regarded as the emblem that excited the soldiers to brave deeds:

L'ornement galant et terrible
Par qui, désormais invincible,
Je puis affronté les hasards—

as 'le gentil' Bernard, court-poet to Louis XV., sings.

These well-known rosettes, made of coloured ribbons, became of real political importance, especially in Paris, between the years 1789 and 1800. It was during the Convention and Directory that the cockades were most in use, and perhaps had the greatest importance attached to them; for then, if the red or tricolour was not worn, the man, woman, or child ran serious risk of being maltreated by the mob, if not dragged before the 'tribunals' by the *sans-culottes*, a fate even worse than the former. Everybody, from the little street *gamin* to the wealthy merchant and high officials of the Convention, wore them; they formed part of the uniform of the soldier, the sailor, and the commissary of police. Ladies of fashion had rosettes arranged in their hair, as well as the *tricoteuses*, who pinned them on their *bonnet rouge* while they danced the hideous Carmagnole round the guillotine.

Some time before the destruction of the Bastille, the black cockades, which had been adopted on the expulsion of Necker, the popular minister, were almost entirely put aside by the people for tricolour ones. Blue and red—being the colours of the city of Paris—were adopted by the National Guard; and white was added as a symbol of the brotherly love that ought to exist between the National Guard and the royal troops. But before this, a green cockade had been adopted by Camille Desmoulins, and it was under this rallying sign that the Bastille was attacked and pulled down. For a brief period the reforming green was mixed with the Bourbon white. In October 1789, the 'three hundred,' or National Assembly, decreed that no other cockade but the tricolour one, which they authorised, was to be worn in public. During the debate, Lafayette rose and said, 'Messieurs, je vous apporte une cocarde qui fera le tour du monde'—words that proved to be almost a prophecy, the French soldiers, a few years later, making the cockade well known to many nations, carrying it over Germany, Italy, Austria, even to the gates of Rome, and into the Silent City of the Doges and many other states. Louis XVI. at last had to countenance the three-coloured rosette, always wearing it when in public, as a kind of peace-offering to his persecutors. But it was not well received among the loyalists. Many a dangerous hubbub was caused by the innocent-looking cockades. At a royal military dinner, given by the king at Versailles soon after having been forced to adopt the popular cockade, an officer of the

royal guards rose from his seat and cried aloud, 'A bas les cocardes de couleur; vive la cocarde blanche, c'est la bonne;' and immediately everybody present trod under foot the national cockades, replacing them with white. This scene gave great umbrage to the liberal party, and was the forerunner of many very serious disturbances, arising from the hatred cherished by the mob for all cockades of only one colour; thinking, and perhaps rightly, that they only helped to encourage party feuds. One day in October 1789, in the Palais-Royal, five of these offending badges were torn from the hats and coats of the wearers and trodden under foot, the wearers being maltreated by the excited crowd.

Orators all over Paris exclaimed against the wearers of the single-coloured rosettes, adding, 'We will hang up to the nearest lamp-post those who dare to wear the anti-patriotic cockades;' for at that time the red cockade was as much abhorred as the white. But, unfortunately, this did not last; the tricolour was little used, and its place usurped by a blood-red rosette. The poor young Dauphin was made to wear that red badge, the symbol of the revolution that had brought his father and mother to a terrible and cruel death.

A curious engraving of a 'popular cockade' is given in Prudhomme's *Révolutions de Paris*, a publication contemporary with the revolution. According to Prudhomme, the cockade was adopted as the national badge by the patriotic General Lafayette, who was then in command of the National Guard, and is probably the identical one which he showed to the Assembly in October 1789. The design was printed in red and blue on a white background. The nation, typified by a female figure, treading upon documents representing the privileges of the nobility and clergy, is seated, and holds in one hand the scales of laws, while in the other she grasps a bundle of rods tied round a huge club surmounted by a Phrygian cap. A medal with the portrait of the king is attached by ribbons to the bundle of rods; and in the corner lies a shield bearing the three *fleurs-de-lis* of the Bourbons. These cockades were extensively sold by the editor and his various agents in Paris. Still, the red cockade gradually crept in and became predominant. At last, great extravagance was expended on these bunches of ribbons; and popular trinkets were devised to replace the simple button: these were small Phrygian caps, and models of the terrible guillotine, horribly christened by the rabble *le rasoir des nobles*, which were made in more or less precious metals, so as to suit the purse of the *sans-culottes* and the gaudy taste of the *merveilleuses* and the *incroyable*. In due time, the more simple tricolour, and the plain blue or violet (the Bonapartist colours), for a short time came into favour, until they were ousted by white favours and Louis XVIII.

During the three days of the revolution in 1830, Lafayette, who was general-in-chief of the National Guard, distributed large quantities of tricolour cockades both to his own men and to the mob who were fighting in the streets behind the barricades.

When the Parisians got tired of their Citizen King, Louis-Philippe, and were busily erecting barricades in all the principal thoroughfares of

the capital, the tricolour ribbon was again the rage. But, unfortunately for the good city, the red cockade raised its head for the space of four days—from the 23d to the 26th of June 1848—and became rampant. So fierce was this rising, that even women were to be seen going about distributing these red favours and exciting the men to deeds of desperation. A horrible scene took place during the third day of the *émeute*. While the troops were taking one of the barricades and the insurgents fleeing from their posts, a woman wearing a huge red cockade shot one of the National Guards dead, and seized the red flag which he had just pulled down from its staff on the barricade, and waving it above her head, dashed down towards the attacking party, braining one of the men with her staff. She was shot. Immediately another woman lifted up the flag which had fallen from the stiffening hands of her dying companion, only to be shot down the next minute. Such severity was necessary, for these women were only too often the leaders of desperate but helpless rallyings of the rebels. During these four days, four generals were shot. General Bréa was taken prisoner at an early period of these miserable conflicts, and was treacherously murdered by the insurgents for not commanding his troops to lay down their arms. He bravely refused to listen to every entreaty and menace of his enemies, preferring to die rather than dishonour his name. The Archbishop of Paris was shot while trying to pacify the rebels; he died the next day from the wounds he had received. The other generals killed were Negrier, Reymond, and Martin Gourgon. General Duvivier died of his wounds, while others were seriously wounded.

Again, the red cockade appeared in Paris, especially at Montmartre and Belleville, and also in Marseilles, during the sanguinary Commune of 1871. The tricolour cockade is still a French official badge, worn alike by the general and the police-officer.

Such was the importance attached to a mere bunch of ribbons variously dyed. Many lives have been sacrificed over these little innocent cockades. They were the symbols of ungovernable political passions, which were at first guided by a handful of unscrupulous men; the general populace, overawed by these tyrants, adopted the badge; and thus the few dissentients were made the more conspicuous, and suffered accordingly.

The Phrygian cap is the next badge of importance. A writer in a revolutionary pamphlet of 1848 gives the following curious origin of this red cap as an emblem of Liberty. He tells us that on the 31st of August 1790 a regiment of Swiss troops, in French pay, revolted at Nancy. After having successfully overcome their officers, they plundered the military chest, and committed other thefts and outrages. A considerable force was obliged to be employed to capture the mutineers, which feat, however, could not be effected until after a long and sanguinary fight in the streets of the city, where, according to another authority, even cannon had to be brought into action. The captured men were sent off to Brest under a strong escort, to work in the galleys for various long terms. However, in 1792, the Commune being in full sway, these galley-slaves

applied for a total pardon, which was immediately granted. Their friends and sympathisers welcomed them back with great rejoicings, thus turning the convict soldiers into momentary heroes. They entered the city still wearing the little red cap, the most conspicuous part of the convict costume, and hereafter to be called the Cap of Liberty. The populace took these caps from the convicts' heads and coifed themselves with them; and thus, through their desperate deeds, they made it an appropriate emblem of a successful and bloody revolution. The writer already mentioned adds that 'this coiffure became the fashion and the sign of ardent patriotism;' and he goes on to say: 'This cap will henceforth only exist as the symbol of Liberty on the plebeian escutcheon, a symbol for ever immortal as Liberty itself.'

However, with all due deference to this authority, we must evidently go to an earlier date for the origin of the badge. It was clearly considered as a national emblem long before 1792, for on the curious cockade already mentioned the cap is shown; and the cockade, Prudhomme states, was accepted by Lafayette some time in November 1789. Again, Prudhomme in a frontispiece to the number of his journal for the 8th of May 1790, places the Phrygian cap in a conspicuous position. The cap appears on two medals struck at Paris in July 1790: one represents the king as taking the oath to a new constitution; and the other commemorates the confederation of the French people. Although these instances point out that the cap was a national badge long before the mutiny took place, it is nevertheless probable that the badge originated with the red convict caps. Many convicts, after having had their prisons broken open and made good their escape, assumed the position of leaders of the rest of the rabble, who looked up to them as heroes and martyrs. This cap, at the height of the Reign of Terror, was almost universally worn by the advanced radicals and the abominable *sans-culottes*. To use the words of a contemporary of the revolution of 1848, the '*bonnet rouge*' lived in the hearts of the people, and was venerated by them, as the symbol of the sufferings of the poor down-trodden people of France.'

The bundle of rods tied up round an axe was another of the revolutionary badges, adopted from the emblems of the ancient Roman lictors. The bundle of rods and the axe represented justice and the strong arm of the law. In France, the place of the axe was taken by a large and knotty club, to represent the force of the people over the higher ranks of society. These last badges were officially recognised, and were used on the coins, bank-notes, and other government property.

The famous tricolour, or French flag, composed of the three colours adopted for the cockades, began its illustrious career as an emblem of the revolution, and a substitute for the more sanguinary red flag, under whose shade some of the most bloodthirsty and inhuman deeds ever recorded in history were perpetrated. It became very popular, and has since deservedly obtained the high esteem of all true French patriots. Under this flag and the eagles of Napoleon Bonaparte, the fiery French soldiers were led to the conquest of Germany, the defeat of the Russians, the complete

subjugation of Italy, and the humbling of Austria. And although it nearly suffered an eclipse in 1871 and 1873, it still rears its head as the proud emblem of the great French nation.

BLOOD-MONEY.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAP. III.—UNDER A BAN.

'Do you think I have been kind to you, Lizzie?' the father asked by-and-by, and he had to make an effort to speak loud enough for her to hear, although they were so near each other.

'Yes, indeed, papa; you have been kind in everything'—She paused—cheeks flushed, and anxiety in her eyes on his account as well as her own, for he seemed to be very ill.

'Except in one respect, and in it you regard me as acting cruelly,' he said, completing the sentence for her. 'Well, you are mistaken; for in that, too, I am trying to be kind, and wish to be so.—I suppose you, Lizzie, like everybody else, think I am a most fortunate man—that the wealth which flows in upon me day by day, and the success which attends every speculation I enter upon, should make me a contented and a proud man?' His manner was so strange, that she was becoming more and more nervous about him, more and more eager to avoid saying anything which might add to the distress he was so evidently afflicted with at this moment.

'Everybody says that you have been wondrously successful.'

'Yes, I have made money,' he said bitterly, 'and I have been miserable. I have worked, as some men drink, to stupefy myself—to obtain forgetfulness. Mother, sister, wife, children—all save you were taken from me. Upon you I concentrated my last hopes of finding some consolation for the past suffering. I have watched over you as a man drowning watches the distant life-boat, and whilst counting the seconds as hours, struggles with all his might to keep himself afloat until the rescuers reach him. I wanted to see you honoured and admired, high amongst the noblest; I wanted to hear your name mentioned as that of one who used wealth wisely and well in relieving the people around you from the sordid cares of life. But you, too, fail me.'

'I would do anything, father, that could afford you comfort; but I cannot think that you would wish me to sacrifice my peace of mind for a position I cannot endure the thought of occupying. Dear papa, I am not fit to play the part of a great lady. The thought of it frightens me; and besides, I could not—I cannot regard Sir Joshua as a woman should regard her husband.'

'You can respect him, and that is enough. I have known some cases, and I have heard of so many more, in which girls, prompted by the sentimental idea of what is called love, have defied their parents, refused their counsel, and have quickly had bitter cause for repentance, that I want to guard you against this danger. Why, you cannot know what you talk about. You are too young, and are moved by your own imagination. Love only comes when we have sounded the depths of suffering.'

'Have I not suffered something in knowing that I displease you?' she said sadly.

'Are you then prepared to put me aside for this man you have known barely two years? Are you prepared to inflict any pain on me so that you may please him? Are you ready to learn what poverty is, for his sake?'

The questions were hard ones for the girl to answer. At the same instant the sense of duty told her that she should say 'No,' and love told her that she must say 'Yes.' She spoke quietly and truthfully, according to her feelings: 'I think I could endure anything for his sake; but—O papa, I do not want to cause you pain.'

'And yet you do it. No doubt you soothe your conscience with the thought that I am unjust to Corbet, and that—as he was bold enough to tell me—in barring your union I am seeking to gratify my own vanity, rather than to assure your welfare.'

'No, no; I do not think that. I don't know what to think or say; I only know that I am very wretched.' She wiped her eyes, but she could not suppress the sobs which were choking her.

He rose hastily and paced the floor, his right hand grasping the wrist of his left, as if to constrain the fierce throbbings of the pulse. That voice was again ringing its monotonous cadence in his brain, and the words were the same as before: 'Am I right, or is this another act of betrayal?' Suddenly he halted, and, resting his hand tenderly on the girl's head, he said huskily: 'For the sake of a dead friend, I wanted to see you in high places, because I know it would have pleased him. Money is nothing to me now except to buy pleasure for you; and it seemed to me that I had discovered the best way of doing that, when Sir Joshua asked me for you. I felt as if the great ambition of my life was attained, I was glad and proud, and believed that my work was accomplished. But I will not force you, however bitter the disappointment may be to me'—

'O papa,' she interrupted, as she sprang up and flung her arms round his neck, weeping for joy, 'what relief you give me!'

He trembled slightly under her embrace: he had no doubt that this time he had given her pleasure. 'I am glad of that, Lizzie.—Now, will you do one thing for me, before we finally decide how to act?'

'Anything—anything you wish.'

'Then will you try to think quietly over this matter for—say a fortnight, without seeing Corbet or writing to him, or reading a letter from him, and then tell me the result of your reflections?'

'I promise; and he will be glad to know you are so good and kind to me.'

The bright look of joyful and affectionate gratitude with which she regarded him was surely compensation enough for the abandonment of his cherished scheme for her exaltation. After all, if carried out, it would apparently only have gratified himself, and perhaps his friend the baronet. He became entirely reconciled to the new order of things, by the transformation in Lizzie during the fortnight in which she had agreed to forego all communication with her lover. The dull and half-frightened manner, which had been growing daily more marked for nearly a year past, disappeared. The sunshine was in her eyes and on her face again,

and her father could hear her singing merrily with the birds in the early hours of the morning.

For one day, Lizzie had thought it strange that Corbet had made no attempt to communicate with her; but she was relieved of all uneasiness on that score when her father mentioned casually that he had been summoned to London in connection with some proposed new railway in South America. She was content to think that her lover had not written, as he would no doubt calculate that his letter would be intercepted. But although, having pledged herself to hold no communication with him for the brief period her father had fixed, she would not have read any letter she might have received, she could not help at some moments feeling a little disappointed that he made no effort to send her some token that he was thinking about her. It seemed very strange that he should not have done so; and when the fortnight had passed, she became eager to have news of or from him. She told her father that she was still of the same mind as when they had last spoken of George Corbet.

'Very well, Lizzie,' he said, patting her on the head. 'You two have conquered. You can write to him, and say we will be pleased to see him whenever you like. But he has not returned from London yet.'

The change in Mr Edwards was as great as that in his daughter. He walked with a lighter step than formerly, and there was a sense of relief pervading his whole conduct. He spoke more softly than he had been accustomed to do; he was more forbearing towards the blunders of others than he had ever been known to be. Hope of peace had entered the man's heart, and he was glad because Lizzie was glad.

She wrote a short letter to Corbet, telling him that he would now be welcome at Riveling Hall, and asking him to come soon. But when another fortnight passed, and there was still no sign from him, she was disturbed, although quite satisfied that, for some reason, he could not have received her letter. The father observed her agitation, and comprehended the cause. 'I understand this business in which Corbet is engaged is one of great importance to him,' he said reassuringly; 'and he must be very much occupied in preparations for his journey. It may be, also, that as I spoke to him so decisively at our last meeting, he is waiting for me to speak. I shall call at his place to-day, and ascertain when he is likely to be in Sheffield.'

Mr Edwards learned from Corbet's clerk that his master was making arrangements to close his office, and was not expected to be in the town for more than one day in order to wind up his affairs there. Mr Edwards thereupon wrote to his prospective son-in-law, telling him that all objection to his suit was withdrawn, and that Lizzie was waiting for him anxiously.

To this he received what was to him a very strange reply:

MY DEAR SIR—I am obliged by your letter. But since we spoke together, I have come to the conclusion that you were perfectly right—your daughter will be much happier with the man you have chosen for her than she ever could be with me. I am unable to write to Miss Edwards

to explain that I am leaving England, and will probably not return for many years, when I hope to learn that she is happy, and has forgotten yours truly,
GEORGE CORBET.

The chagrin with which this epistle inspired Mr Edwards was mingled with a certain degree of cynical self-satisfaction. So, then, he had been right. This young fellow's passion for Lizzie had been prompted as much by the knowledge that she would inherit a large fortune as by her own attractions; and as soon as he saw his way to making a position for himself, he callously rejected the girl who had fought so devotedly, so desperately for him. He was not worthy of her.

Edwards folded up the letter carefully, replaced it in the envelope, and put it in his pocket. But what was he to say to Lizzie?—how persuade her that she had made a lucky escape from a man who valued her only as a stepping-stone to fortune? She would not believe it, and again there would be pale cheeks and sad silence in the house.

Yet Edwards felt somehow that there was a false note in this extraordinary missive; there was a suggestion of something behind, when read in the full remembrance of that interview at the foot of the park. Corbet must have been moved by something more than a sudden conviction that the father was perfectly right in opposing the match, before he could have so completely belied the protestations he had then so boldly made, that no power save Lizzie's own request could induce him to abandon his suit.

Edwards decided to say nothing about the letter until he had seen Corbet and obtained a full explanation from him. His silence, however, did not avail much; for Lizzie's anxiety increased day by day, and he no longer heard her singing with the birds in the morning. He was distressed and perplexed. He began to consider whether or not it would be best to wait until he could see Corbet, or to show her the letter, and so get the worst over at once. But he hesitated when he looked at the piteous face, and noted the eager watchfulness for every post, followed by the shadow which fell upon her when there was still no letter from her lover. He determined to end this suspense one way or another. At breakfast, he announced that he was going to London, and would return on the following day. This was nothing extraordinary, for he had occasion to make frequent excursions to the metropolis on business. But this time his journey had special interest for Lizzie, and with flushed cheeks she inquired: 'Do you think you will see—Mr Corbet?'

'Of course I shall see him,' he answered with affected gaiety. 'Have you any message for him?'

'I don't know. I should like him to tell me whether he has got my letter—I should like him to write,' she said with pensive confusion.

'I daresay he will write if he cannot come. I must say that he does not seem to be so eager to come, now that the door is open to him, as he seemed to be when it was closed. Perhaps that is only due to the contrariness of some natures.' This was spoken jocularly, but with a view to prepare her in some degree for the result which he anticipated. She said nothing; but the shaft

had struck home, and the question arose in her mind—had not her father prophesied truly, that this feeling they had believed would endure for ever, was—on one side at anyrate—only a fleeting passion or fancy, which faded whenever a new object was presented to the mind? Then she started away from what was to her a horrible thought—that George Corbet could be false.

'I am sure he will come when you tell him that he may do so,' she said with forced calmness, and bitterly conscious that she did not quite believe what she was saying—that she was only trying to defend the man who had said he loved her, and who had won her love.

The father understood and spoke hopefully; but in his heart he had a feeling of fierce resentment towards Corbet. He believed him to be false, and was angry at the thought that for such a fellow he had given up one of his most cherished projects. However, he telegraphed to him that he wished to see him at Anderton's Hotel, in Fleet Street, that evening at seven on important business. Seated in the train, Edwards tried to see his way through the maze, whilst to his fellow-passengers he appeared to be engaged with a newspaper. He had not one jot of regret on his own account that the match was to be broken off by Corbet, and that his daughter should learn what he regarded as a salutary although severe lesson. He would indeed have rejoiced if he had not been troubled by the fear that the shock might seriously injure her health, and that she, too, might be taken from him. He was also indignant that his approval, which had been so importunately sought, should be insultingly rejected when given. He had a right to know the meaning of the fellow's inexplicable conduct, and he would know it.

At the appointed hour Corbet presented himself in the private room engaged by the great Sheffield merchant in the hotel. Evidently, he was not in a happy frame of mind any more than Lizzie, for he looked pale and worried. He bowed on his entrance, but did not offer his hand; and Edwards, who had extended his, instantly withdrew it, whilst he stared at his visitor with an expression of angry perplexity. 'Upon my soul, Corbet, your manner in meeting me is as peculiar and ungracious as your letter. What is the matter with you? Have you got entangled with anybody else, or are you guilty of some fraud which is about to be discovered?'

'Neither of your agreeable surmises, Mr Edwards, is correct,' rejoined Corbet gravely.

'Then I cannot be wrong—anyway, I hope I am not in supposing that you are sorry for the way in which you have befooled my daughter?'

'I am sorry for her,' was the answer, and there was a nervous twitch of the lips, a slight tremor in the voice, which testified to the sincerity of his words.

'Then perhaps you will be good enough to explain this repudiation of your engagement to her—an engagement made against my will, and which only a few weeks ago you told me would hold good in defiance of my wishes and authority. I have come to London expressly to obtain this explanation, and I do not think you can refuse it, if you wish to be regarded as an honourable man.'

Corbet looked, as he felt, decidedly uncomfort-

able, and he seemed to be unable to meet the stern gaze of Lizzie's father. He answered in a low mumbling way: 'I am sorry; but I cannot explain. You desired to break off our engagement, and now it is done, why are you not satisfied?'

'But you shall explain, I say. Has she done anything to justify this action of yours?'

'No; *she* has done nothing,' replied Corbet emphatically, and for the first time he looked straight in the eyes of his interrogator.

'Then you must have done something which makes you feel unworthy of her. If that is so, I can respect the feeling; but you must yourself tell her why you break all the pledges you have given her.'

'You are mistaken, sir; I have done nothing to forfeit my own or her respect.'

'Then, as I am utterly unable to guess at the motives which have prompted you to adopt this course of deliberate insult to my daughter and myself, you are the more bound to help us to understand the position. You are perfectly aware that you are safe from an action for breach of promise; and you are also perfectly aware that I have had no desire for an alliance with you. But as a mere matter of courtesy towards my daughter, I must insist on an explanation.' He spoke with contemptuous indifference as to what the explanation might be, as if convinced beforehand that it must be some flimsy excuse to veil the fact that the man thought he could make a better bargain elsewhere.

'I have already said that I can give you no further explanation than that I believe you are right—my union with your daughter would not be a happy one.'

'In that case,' observed Edwards, more scornfully than before, 'you must be prepared to hear yourself called a liar and a coward. A liar, because you deceived my poor child by pledges of fidelity which you did not mean to keep—or, at anyrate, do not intend to keep now; and a coward, because you refuse to say why you offer her this unpardonable insult.'

It was evident that Corbet felt keenly this forcible denunciation of his behaviour, and that he had to make violent efforts to maintain self-control, for his cheeks tingled and his eyes flashed fiercely whilst his hands were clenched, as if he were about to strike the speaker down. 'For her sake, I will allow you to say what you have said without thrashing you, as I would have done any one else who had dared to utter one of the words you have used.' He spoke rapidly and with much emotion. 'You do not understand what it has cost me to come to the decision expressed in my letter to you. I have borne your taunts for Lizzie's sake, and that should be proof enough that my feelings towards her are unaltered—and they never will alter. But in her name, and on your own account, I ask you to be satisfied, and to seek no further explanation than I have given.'

'But I am not satisfied; and I must take back to my child some information which will content her that this breach is made by you after full deliberation, and confirms the objection I raised when the affair first came to my knowledge.'

'Will you look back twenty years or so, and then insist?' queried Corbet pittingly.

Edwards lifted his heavy eyebrows quickly, but he replied with calmness, although there was an uneasy under-current evinced by the searching gaze which he fixed on Corbet. 'I am puzzled by your request, but I still insist.'

'Then, if you will have it, blame yourself. The reason why I can neither marry Lizzie nor explain to her is summed up in the name of a man—Jack Wolton.'

Edwards's face became like stone and his lips were parched. 'Well?' he queried stolidly.

'He was my brother,' answered Corbet passionately; 'and you are Ned Altcar.'

AMERICAN NEWSPAPER HEADLINES.

THERE does not seem much art about giving a suitable heading to an article or a paragraph of news, yet experience proves that a novel or striking headline attracts attention, and causes to be read that which might otherwise be passed over. One of the most successful of English editors fully recognised this, and himself wrote every headline which appeared in his paper; but in this country the reporter generally writes headings to his own articles, and if he use ordinary intelligence, they are rarely altered. In England, sensationalism and anything approaching 'smartness' are avoided; but in America, the very opposite is the rule. Indeed, so much attention is paid to headlines in that country, that there is engaged on the staff of every newspaper of importance a gentleman whose duty it is to supply headlines to articles and paragraphs. Some of these headline writers are paid large salaries, and have a wide reputation.

Mr George Augustus Sala once said that American journalists rarely take anything seriously; they are perpetually trying to be smart and amusing. Few people who have even an elementary knowledge of American newspapers will call into question the truth of Mr Sala's assertion. The American journalist is nothing if not original; and this ruling passion is strikingly exemplified in the very headlines. We have, for instance, never seen but one heading in English newspapers for those simple announcements which never fail to interest female readers—we mean the Births, Marriages, and Deaths. In America, however, they use such headlines as Cradle, Altar, Tomb; Hatches, Matches, Despatches, and so on; while one original genius sums up life thus—Births, Flirtations, Engagements, Breakings-off, Marriages, Divorces, Deaths. Then, instead of the familiar heading, Poetry, we find Lays of the Latest Minstrels, or The Warblers' Corner. The columns of clippings, however, afford scope for the most variety. One editor heads his column of jokes, Render unto Scissors the Things that are Scissors; while another follows with Aut Scissors aut Nullus. One Thing and Another, Drops of Ink, Various Topics, Microbes, Nuggets, All Sorts, Faggots, Pressed Bricks—these are a few others taken at random. Hash is, however, perhaps the most appropriate of the lot. These headlines appear very strange to us; yet it should not be forgotten that, nearly one hundred years ago, the *Times* published weak jokes under the extraordinary head of 'Cuckoo!'

The Fargo (Dakota) *Press* has some of its headings in rhyme. Here are two specimens :

Picknickers on a Sunday Boat are lost—A Judgment
Sure.
But Lightning Strikes a Meetin' House—The Reason's
More Obscure.

If with a Girl Alfonso's Blessed, from Jail the Cubans
Shoot;
While if it be a Boy, they get a Chromo each, to boot.

According to the *Detroit Free Press*, another Fargo paper came out with the following specimens :

In the Spring
The Maiden's Fancy Lightly Turns to Thoughts of
Love.

In the Spring the Festive Oil Can Hoists a Servant
Girl Above.

In the Spring
The Kansas Farmers for Sweet Rain begin to Pant,
And in the Spring the People's Hopes are centred
Hard and Fast in Grant.

This style of thing was kept up for some time, always ending with 'Grant.'

Sensationalism is the great characteristic of American newspaper headlines. When General Grant died, the *Times* headed its article, 'Death of General Grant.' This is how the heading appeared in the *New York Herald* :

Dead !

General Grant Surrenders to the Grim Conqueror.

A Peaceful End.

His Deathbed Surrounded by His Weeping Family.

Nine Months' Agony.

Suffering the Pangs of his Cancer with quiet Heroism.

Medical Skill Useless.

The Sure and Stealthy Progress of his Dreadful Disease.

Story of His Life.

Events of His Varied Career from Cadet to President.

Hero of Many Battles.

Playing a Giant's Part in Crushing the Rebellion.

Gratitude of the Republic.

Twice Elected to the Exalted Office of Chief Magistrate.

His Tour of the World.

Here is another specimen of sensationalism :

Wedding Bells.

Marriage of the Princess Beatrice of England.

Prince Henry of Battenberg.

A Forecast of the Ceremony which will be held to-day.

Revelations of the Programme.

Scene Within the Church of St Mildred at Whippingham.

The Ministers of State.

Queen Victoria Wearing the Crown and Mourning Robes.

The Guests of Royalty.

Breakfasting at Osborne. The Fruits and the Cakes.

In a Floral Bower.

Voyage of Inspection Among the Dresses of the Bride.

Visions of Fair Millinery.

Laces from Ireland, and Tartans from the Highlands.

Myrtle and White Heather.

A Veil that was Worn at the Marriage of the Queen.

Tennyson's Epithalamium.

In some few of our English newspapers there are occasionally seen sensational headlines ; but we have never seen anything nearly so startling as the two specimens we have quoted, each of which headings occupies more than half a column of the *New York Herald*. We believe that in some American papers even more space than this is occasionally occupied by headlines to a comparatively short article. One New York journal, indeed, goes the length of having all its headlines printed in red ink. We have not seen this periodical ; we make the statement on the authority of a trade journal ; but to many journalists

and printers the difficulties of carrying out this plan in the case of a newspaper of even a moderately large circulation seem nearly insuperable. Most English newspapers have no headings to leading articles, and in America we believe the headline to them is rarely allowed to exceed one line. The only noteworthy innovation of late years in the matter of headlines is to be seen in the *Daily News*, in which the headings to the leading articles are what is technically known as 'let in' at the side, a style which is frequently adopted in certain books.

JONAH FROTH.

JONAH FROTH lay a-dying. Some of the crew, of whom one was a negro, had tenderly propped up their venerable skipper on several pillows, and covered his lower limbs with a tarpaulin. The negro was particularly assiduous in his attentions, and from time to time would heave a deep groan, as if his heart were breaking. The cabin window of the *Flying Scud* was wide open, and through it could be discerned the wharfs and houses of Singapore, and several vessels riding at anchor.

My acquaintance with Froth had been but of short duration ; but I had seen and heard sufficient of the old salt to feel more than a passing interest in the career of this extraordinary person ; and when, one morning, I was summoned to attend his dying bed, and to hasten thither with all despatch, I confess I departed upon my errand with a considerable weight of sorrow at my heart.

As I entered his cabin, the negro quickly rose from his seat at the bedside and addressed me in an excited manner, but in tones sufficiently inaudible to preclude the possibility of their reaching the ears of the dying man : 'Mass'r Froth, em be berry sick dis marnin.'

Five or six big seamen, who seemed evidently embarrassed at the novelty of the situation, were leaning against the wall with their hands in their tarry pockets. Their presence could be of no avail ; they were exhausting all the fresh air that could possibly come at the patient, so I motioned to them quietly to retire. They went out one by one, and very softly, taking one long parting glance, which had in it the significance of a final farewell, at the pale features of their dying master.

An inarticulate ejaculation from Froth drew me at once to his bedside. I lifted his powerful hand in my own and gently pressed it ; it was as if a child should dandle the paw of a bear. The fingers were enormous, yet they were in perfect keeping with the immense muscular strength and stature of the man ; but the temperature was that of death, and his pulse was barely perceptible. I inquired if he were in pain.

The negro here interposed in a low whisper : 'Mass'r Froth, em hab no pain de ole of de time ; but em berry sick dis marnin, em keep nothing down.'

I administered a slight cordial, which considerably revived him, and, to my astonishment, he

clasped hold of the tarpaulin and gradually drew himself upwards into a sitting posture. It was but a momentary reassertion of his old strength; and I assisted him back upon his pillows, where he lay panting with exhaustion, with his eyes closed. Presently, he re-opened them, as if a thought had struck him, and he began fumbling with great earnestness in his breast-pocket, as if he would dislodge something that was there concealed.

'Em hab a letter from em missus,' promptly suggested the indefatigable negro; 'see em put em in em pocket yester marnin; em no read yet—sure ob dat.'

I saw the whole situation at once. A letter from his wife in England had arrived by yesterday's mail; he was too ill to open it; and nobody on board was sufficiently scholar enough to decipher its contents. I proffered him my assistance in the matter, which he readily assented to; and putting my hand in his breast-pocket, I drew forth a rather soiled packet which bore the following inscription: 'Mr JONAH FROTH, Skipper, c/o the *Flying Scud*, Singapore.' I put the letter into his hand, and he grasped hold of it with great fervency; he then raised it slowly to his lips, and returned it to me with one of the most beautiful smiles that ever suffused the rugged countenance of a British seaman. Here the negro uttered a deep groan and wrung his hands, as if in the direst despair.

Froth signalled to me to unfasten the packet and read the contents aloud. I broke the seal, and proceeded with my task, which was one of great difficulty. At first sight, the whole appeared like a mass of Egyptian hieroglyphics; it was the worst writing I had ever seen. The syntax was infamous, and the inflections of many of the words were quite new to me. But what the document lacked in scholarship, it made up in the beautiful and faultless language of the heart. Nothing could have been more tender and playfully confiding. After two or three careful perusals, which occupied several minutes, I considered myself sufficiently prepared to venture on a reading of it aloud to the one man in all the world on whose ear alone could fall, like softest fingerings of invisible strings, the odd and unmelodious accents of its speech. For Froth it was destined to be the last earthly record of the devoted and unalienable affection of that creature to whose bosom he had once been pleased to impart the mysterious secret of his soul's love. The writer (God pity the 'relict's lot), ignorant of the terrible event that was at this very moment in progress, and all unsuspecting of the store of infinite suffering that was in preparation for her, began in the liveliest vein, and ever and anon would make some jocose sally, evidently intended to disturb the risible faculties of her rugged spouse. Alas, for the irony of Fate! Alas, that the sprightliness and unchecked license of her cheerful, loving heart should, at so inopportune a moment, have led her to wanton around the flickering consciousness of the dying man! It was as if she could be merry over the chill pallors and distressing incoherencies of death. To Froth, the reading of the letter would probably occasion a large amount of mental agitation; not through the lack of all anxiety and distress on his wife's part on account of his present state, but

through the utter absence it would convey of any taint of suspicion that such a state was considered at all probable.

I have not considered it necessary to transcribe the whole of this remarkable document—which now lies in one of my private drawers—nor to adhere always very rigidly to an exact rendering of the original, retaining only such passages as bear more immediately on the present narrative, or that may be of general interest to the reader.

My DEER HUSBIND—I am quite well and jolly and I hope you be to. Missus bunday says i am gettin stout and deer miss edith the parsins dorter says as how you wont no me in the new cap wich she give me new years day. Mister Tom the squeers son have been a drinkin agen sumit awfu, and missus Emblem she have brok her legg wich is very bad for her. As god dellived jonah out of the wale so may he do to you from the danegers of the see. you are a bad chap to stay away so long this time, i dont mind your goin to see as you was born their and its quit naturl. Aint i proud of my saylor thats all. me and you niver had a hot word together as i can mind and you aint no fool be you tho you was brought in the world all fools day come one when you can thurs a deer sole. the cow wich you give me last sumer crope thro billy jones hedge munday nite and treaded down his grass wich made un sware bad and the ole sow has had some more piggs, i hope mister Ambatch the black man is well, giv my respecs to un and tell un to mind an air your clean close well of a Saturday nite.—Your own SUSAN.

When I had finished the reading of the letter, I folded it carefully up and replaced it in Froth's breast-pocket. To my surprise, a triumphant smile was gleaming in his large blue eyes. He lay perfectly motionless, but was muttering indistinctly between his teeth. What that something was, who will ever know? During the final collapse of all that intricate and harmonious structure which constitutes what we term a human life, who shall tell what vestiges of the decaying order are invisibly being woven into and incorporated with the new; deriving from their association with the transmuting principles of the fresh being a colour and a breadth of glorification little dreamt of by the sorrowing spectator. I said Froth's was a triumphant smile; then a triumph that indicated the apotheosis of human affection and the purely spiritual appreciation of its object. If so, then the inaudible utterance was the involuntary shout that acknowledged the total surrender of the soul to the satisfying bounties of the revelation.

At this moment, the negro, whose vanity was highly gratified by the allusion to himself, and who had entirely lost the forlorn expression that had hitherto rested upon his ebony countenance, pushed his woolly head in close proximity to my own, and volunteered a personal statement: 'Mass'r Froth's missus em berry nice lady. Ambatch em always ar Mass'r Froth's lily cloz well; em no cotch cold dat way. Like Mass'r Froth's missus: send respec to ole nigger—dat good joke!'

The negro was grinning from ear to ear; and

had I not at this instant clapped my hand tightly over his yawning orifice, he would fairly have given way to a hearty peal of laughter. He came to himself immediately, and looked perfectly miserable at the thought of having so grossly violated all the principles of decorum in an hour of such solemnity. He gradually sank more and more into an inconsolable mood, and went and seated himself over against the door of the cabin, wringing his hands and wagging his head to and fro. I addressed him in a reassuring manner, but all to no purpose. His conscience, like an inexorable judge, had passed sentence of condemnation upon him, and he writhed beneath the lashes of the avenger.

I turned again to Froth. He was beginning to grow extremely restless, throwing his huge arms about, and continually shifting his head from one side to the other. I spoke to him soothingly, and bade him signify if there were anything he would still wish done. He turned and looked at me and smiled serenely—such a smile as only irradiates the face of an upright man upon his dying bed. It was a smile of perfect peace and satisfaction. Death was standing at his side ready with his uplifted dart to strike, but he saw not the monster. Presently he feebly raised his hand and pointed with his forefinger to a corner of the cabin. I looked in the direction indicated, and perceived a large sea-chest lying open, full of a confused mass of books and papers.

'Ambatch,' I cried, 'what is it your master wants? He is pointing at the big chest.'

'Specs em wants em private logbook,' replied the negro, still rocking himself backwards and forwards in an agitated frame of mind.

'Then bring it me at once,' I returned.

The negro did as he was commanded; and after a short and brisk search, he unearthed a dingy-looking pocket-book with brass clasps, and tied about very securely with a piece of red tape. I took the volume, and held it before Froth's eyes. He looked pleased, and made a supreme effort to speak. I stooped and applied my ear to his mouth. A low sound was all that he emitted. I quickly unwound the tape; and having unfastened the clasps, I laid the book open before him. I noticed that one page was doubled under; at this place he inserted one of his fingers, and then pushed the book feebly towards me, looking earnestly round the room, to see who were present. Perceiving that Ambatch and I were alone, he composed himself on his pillows, and made a motion to me to commence reading.

The entry, though made in a somewhat shaky hand, was perfectly legible, and free from all erasures and interpolations. The orthography was correct, and what struck me as being particularly remarkable, the composition was generally grammatical, and always vigorous and well arranged. The thoughts were not loosely jumbled together like coloured papers in a bag; there were no tedious retrogressions and iterations. It was a straight logical course, with but one beginning, one middle, and one end. The whole was a brief and pithy moral retrospect of his past life, concluding with a short appendix, that consisted of a cluster of chronological dates, to each of which was affixed some important event in his private history. It was dated exactly a

month before his decease. I commenced reading as follows:

'I, Jonah Froth, skipper of the *Flying Scud*, with the apprehension of the near approach of death upon me, have thought it right and fit to here set forth, for the warning and encouragement of all those who hereafter shall sail in this craft, some few of the leading principles that have actuated my conduct during the term of my mortal life. I do it with all modesty, conscious of innumerable imperfections, and mindful of frequent departures from the straight path of duty.' This was the preamble. Then followed a brief list of what Froth considered to be the more essential virtues to be cultivated by every seaman. These were—sobriety, honesty, purity, and valour. Then he went on to say:

'As to sobriety, I never was intoxicated in my life, and have often been laughed at for my abstemious habits. In the year 1840, one of my shipmates died from the effects of dram-drinking at Bombay. From that moment I resolved solemnly to give up my one daily glass of grog, and have nothing to do with a fluid that was capable of taking away the life of a fellow-creature. That was more than forty years ago. I have kept my vow. As to honesty, I have never told a lie to any man, that I can remember; and in all my dealings with my fellows, I have ever laboured to be straightforward and above-board. With reference to purity, no one dare tell Jonah Froth that he ever spoke an obscene word. I have never mixed with low company; and as to valour, I have never been frightened of any man. Of the Evil one I have always been afraid; for to be cast upon a lee-shore with the fiend for a companion has always struck me as being the worst of ills. Now, one may be sober, honest, pure, and brave, and yet be a dunderhead; and as I was unfortunately born at two o'clock in the morning, on the 1st of April 1810, it has always been painfully evident to me that I must therefore have consequently been a born fool.'

Honest, simple-hearted Jonah! Who but himself would have had the candour to own as much? And he went on to say: 'No doubt, to this circumstance I must ascribe my thick-headedness in running the *Woodlark*, nine hundred tons, ashore on the Coromandel Coast, in the year 1849, in broad daylight, and with a moderate breeze blowing from E.S.E. The same event probably accounts for my misadventure in the Java sea, on the night of the 1st of August 1856, when I allowed a horde of vagabond pirates to board my vessel the *Sea-swallow*, and batten us down beneath the hatches for sixteen hours, when we were released by an English cruiser that providentially hove in sight. At the same time, I, Jonah Froth, have ever striven to do my duty to the best of my ability. What shall I say more? My hour draws near'—

Here I interrupted my reading. Froth's hour had come. His eyes were fixed, and a glassy film sparkled on their entire surface. I looked at the clock, which was ticking away unconcernedly over the head of his couch: it indicated exactly two hours after noon. Duly it announced the time of day; and then, suddenly as if by magic, the revolution of its invisible wheels was arrested. The pendulum gave one or two faltering oscillations to left and right, and

finally became stationary. At the same instant, a vivid flash lighted up the cabin and shed a momentary radiance over Froth's pale distorted features. It was followed by a tremendous peal of thunder, that shook the timbers of the *Flying Scud*, and went rolling away over the distant waters of the ocean. For a second, Ambatch stood transfixed, with eyeballs bursting from their sockets; then he fled from the cabin and bolted up the companion-ladder like an imp of darkness. Froth neither saw nor heard; Death and I were alone in his chamber.

Children of the ocean, seamen of this worthy craft, away each to your allotted task! An excellent man, a very excellent man, hath passed from your midst. In his name, in the name of Jonah Froth, whose spirit shall walk these decks as your presiding genius, even unto this good ship's final voyage, I exhort you to be men—men of whom old Neptune shall be proud, and whom Britannia shall not be ashamed to call her sons. Would to heaven, I thought, as I dropped into the boat that was to convey me back to the shore—would to heaven that throughout our 'leviathans afloat' and richly freighted argosies, down even to the craziest brown-sailed smack that goes a-trolling in the waters of the North Sea, might be infused the leaven of Jonah Froth! With the entire quantum of British seamen, naval and mercantile, as a multiplicand, and for a multiplier the person of the worthy skipper himself, and I think I see such a solid and irresistible product as might well intimidate even a combination of the war-fleets of entire Europe.

The startling phenomena attendant upon Froth's death have ever since haunted my imagination. The sudden stopping of the timepiece precisely at the hour of two, which, as he himself writes, was the very hour of his nativity, together with the grand but awful accompaniment of a tropical tempest, were of such a kind as to work an immediate revolution in the whole of my moral being, and to convert me from the enviable condition of a cool and practical observer of nature and her diverse operations, into one of constant apprehension and vigilant watchfulness for signs and tokens of approaching events.

SINGULAR GOOD-FRIDAY CUSTOMS IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

A quaint and curious custom has been practised for over four hundred years on Good-Friday in the churchyard of St Bartholomew-the-Great, Smithfield, once the finest Norman church in London, and still exhibiting in what is left of it great architectural beauty in the grandeur of its Norman arcades. In this churchyard, on Good-Friday, twenty-one poor widows, belonging to the parish, are assembled round a flat stone tomb of an 'unknown person'; and each widow 'picks up' therefrom a new sixpence, twenty-one of these coins having been placed there by the churchwardens. The origin of this charitable dole is unknown. There are no traces of any will, nor is there any fund set apart for this purpose; but the few shillings necessary are usually subscribed for by two or three of the parishioners. The legend referring to the dole is, that some centuries ago an old widow lady, a resident in the parish, directed by her will that her tomb in the

churchyard should be visited by twenty-one aged widows after matins every Good-Friday morning, and that they should 'there and then each pick up a new sixpence,' to be laid on the flat top of the stone in readiness for them. Although this curious custom has been observed for four hundred years, the name of the founder has been lost, and even her tomb is unknown. The old ladies, however, are accommodated at a large flat stone without a name, where the dole is regularly paid every Good-Friday morning.

Another very fanciful custom is observed on Good-Friday morning by direction of a pious citizen named Peter Symonds, who died in 1686. By his will he directed that sixty of the youngest boys of Christ's Hospital, commonly called the 'Blue-coat School,' should attend matins every Good-Friday morning in the church of Allhallows, Lombard Street, the testator's parish; and after the service was over, each boy was to receive a new penny and a bag of raisins. This practice is strictly carried out at the present day; the raisins are placed in paper bags, and the pennies, perfectly new from the bank, procured for the occasion. Fully appreciating the good deed of Symonds, another citizen, William Petts by name, who died in the year 1692, by his will directed that 'the minister who preached the sermon on Good-Friday morning to the sixty Blue-coat Boys should receive a fee of twenty shillings; the clerk, four shillings; the sexton, three shillings and sixpence.' This ceremony is strictly carried out every Good-Friday morning, the churchwardens benevolently adding an additional grant, in order that the children of the ward and Sunday schools might also be partakers of some of the nice things appertaining to the Good-Friday hospitalities. On the last occasion, a very large congregation assembled at the church of Allhallows to hear the sermon and witness the singular and interesting ceremonial.

The ancient city of London is remarkable for many curious customs having their origin centuries back, to which, perhaps, we may allude more fully at a future time. The two above referred to are, however, the only ones we believe associated with Good-Friday.

S O N N E T.

THERE is a hallowed sweetness in the name
Of Poet. Human power may make a king.
The gift of song is such a holy thing,
So bright, apart from wealth or worldly fame,
That wheresoe'er 'tis found, men know it came
From God. The lark that with untiring wing
Mounts heavenward morning's sweetest hymn to
sing,
Could not his source of song more surely claim
Than he who, though by earthly ills oppress,
Sings, as God bids him, of eternal truth;
Tears cannot quench the fire within his breast,
Which burns more brightly, fanned by grief and pain.
Though death destroy the body, it is vain!
The soul lives on in Song's perpetual youth.

W. G. GRIFFITH.

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